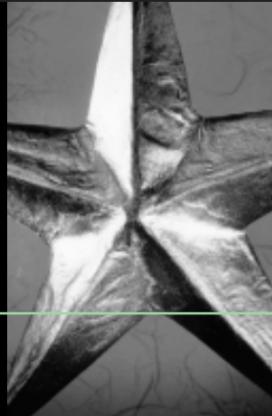


News Connection

A monthly newsletter for DSHS staff and friends

Gov. Locke honors DSHS Distinguished Managers and Sustaining Leaders

Two managers were recently honored by Gov. Gary Locke for Sustaining Leadership recognizing their long-standing leadership in state government.



Dr. Antoinette Krupski
Research Manager
Division of Alcohol and
Substance Abuse



"Toni has truly left her mark in Washington state and the results of studies she has initiated have established a benchmark for other states to attempt to achieve."
— Ed Hidano, Assistant Secretary, Health and Rehabilitative Services Administration

Over the last several years, the Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse (DASA) has established a national reputation for excellence in outcome-based research in the substance abuse field. This movement has been under the leadership of Dr. Antoinette "Toni" Krupski, DASA's research manager.

Dr. Krupski established the impact and prevalence of substance abuse, then moved on to studies on the effectiveness of treatment. Under her dynamic leadership the division has taken part in over 50 different studies. She provides a clear direction for the division, a direction that has been planned and coordinated through a broad range of stakeholders.

Toni has reached out to investigators elsewhere in DSHS and at Washington's universities to work collaboratively, effectively, and efficiently on evaluation studies. She organized and maintains a Research Subcommittee of the Citizen's Advisory Council, which includes substance abuse researchers from state universities, the Veteran's Administration and state government.

Since joining DASA, Toni has initiated and received over \$10 million from grant applications to do research and data analysis. In 1998 she was appointed chair of a 19-state steering committee of a national project to reach consensus on client outcomes.

Nancy Zahn
Regional Administrator, Region 3
Division of Children and
Family Services



"Nancy's hallmark is her visionary approach to administration. She has shown incredible skill and wisdom in building collaborative solutions that involve many facets of the community. These efforts educate and sustain solutions for our children." — Rosie Oreskovich, Assistant Secretary, Children's Administration

In her 27 years of service, Nancy Zahn has been a valuable contributor to improving the lives of children. She is a hard worker, task master, and respected leader.

While an area manager, Nancy started the first multi-agency collaboration in forming the Council on Integrated Programs. This is a collaboration of city and county governments, private social service agencies in Snohomish County, and representatives from various direct service programs in state government. Joint projects and resources have been created across agencies and systems.

Nancy is a strong supporter of staff and encourages innovation in the field, such as continuous quality improvement projects that improve services to children. One collaborative effort with private agencies aims to increase the number of foster parents for adolescents. Another is placing greater emphasis and resources on searching for and involving relatives in a dependent child's case.

"These leaders challenge traditional thinking to make state service the standard of excellence citizens rightfully expect," said Gov. Locke.

Nancy has also spearheaded efforts to improve relationships with Native American tribes in the region. This has resulted in more services being provided to children by their tribal service systems.

Turn to page 5 to read about the three "Distinguished Managers" the Governor is honoring.

Inside

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- Secretary Quasim on the work we do **2**
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- Staff again use Saturday for others **6**

Division of Child Support thanks employers for helping kids

By Bob Withrow,
Program Specialist, Division of Child Support

Each August, the Division of Child Support (DCS) celebrates Child Support Awareness Month. This year the theme is "Thanks employers, kids depend on you to make it happen. Child Support Pays!"

The Division is especially pleased to honor and thank employers across the state who have contributed so much to the child support program and to the lives of Washington's

children. Employers contribute by deducting child support from non-custodial parents' wages. In fact, employers remit 60 percent of all child support the division collects.

Employers also contribute by enrolling children in medical insurance plans, and by reporting newly-hired employees to the division. Often, performing these actions imposes a significant burden on employers, especially small businesses.

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The News Connection

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Secretary's Corner

by Lyle Quasim



Recently I was interviewed by a reporter who said, "You have an incredibly tough job." Some people seem to think that my job is the toughest job in DSHS. I don't feel that way.

I have worked as a direct service provider, supervisor of front-line staff, program manager, regional representative, division director, assistant secretary, and now secretary during my career with DSHS. At every one of those jobs I worked hard, very hard. The work didn't start out easy and get harder as I was promoted; the work and compensation were just different.

Over the years I've heard people say that public employees don't work as hard as those in the private sector, and they're not quite as sharp, otherwise they'd be working for the Microsofts and Boeings. This is far from the truth.

I've said this before and I say it again, we must recognize and honor the importance and quality of all the work that goes on every day throughout the department.

Think about the switchboard operator with overlapping calls. She/he's probably working on three other assignments between calls. Case managers working with the elderly, young children, people with developmental disabilities, those seeking child support or working to leave poverty are constantly juggling competing demands. These are intelligent, well-educated, hard working people who carry responsibility with dignity and humor.

I believe every DSHS employee is important. Each of you has a tough job. As you work each day, take time to honor and respect your performance and abilities and those of your co-workers. Don't buy into the myth that your work does not require that extra level of sharpness jobs in the private sector do.

There is nothing "easy" about your state jobs. Take pride in what you do. I know I do.

On another note: I want to share with you an e-mail I recently sent to my management team. "As many of you know, Charley and I have worked for more than 30 years for the department and retirement is an option for both of us. Knowing our status, a number of DSHS staff and other friends have been asking us when we plan to retire.

"Serving at the Governor's pleasure, we are targeting our retirement to happen at the end of Gov. Gary Locke's first term, January 2001. As that time draws nearer, we will re-evaluate our plans with the Governor before determining a specific date. When we make the final decision, we will give you, our fellow DSHS employees, our notice as early as possible.

"Thank you for your interest in our future, and most of all, thank you for the excellent work you do. It is your work and commitment to the people DSHS serves that makes our jobs so rewarding and much more enticing than retirement!"

Lyle Quasim



Words about our work

Employees, clients, and the public share thoughts on the work we do

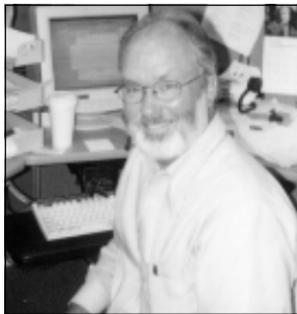
Send your thoughts and/or letters from clients to Secretary Lyle Quasim, attention: Letters to The News Connection, P.O. Box (Mailstop) 45010, Olympia WA 98504; via e-mail Quasil@dshs.wa.gov

Dear Secretary Quasim,

I am supervising a recently-hired caseworker, Ron Stewart, who has fully amazed me with the humanitarian excesses he has put into his caseload.

Most recently, I approved a request for a dumpster on behalf of an adolescent female on his caseload. The child is an orphan whose parents left her a house as her only inheritance. While not much of a house, mind you, this is all this child has from her parents.

The child has relatives who have been living in the house and then vacated the property suddenly, leaving the home in what I understood to be a deplorable condition.



Ron Stewart

When I approved the request for a dumpster, it was my understanding that Ron, myself, and perhaps another caseworker or two would rendezvous at the home on the weekend to sanitize it to the point that we could turn it over to a property management company who could then manage the property appropriately until the child could market the home.

By the time I was able to join Ron at the home, quite belatedly, I found that he had ordered the largest industrial size dumpster available (really big!) and had, working virtually alone, filled the dumpster entirely with the refuse the relatives had left behind.

I do not know how to express my admiration for a caseworker who selflessly devoted so much of his own time to the help of a child.

She will never be able to truly appreciate the depth of what this man has done on her behalf, even if someone takes the time to explain it to her.

His only apparent motive was that he could not stand idly by and allow the property to deteriorate and be foreclosed on at the child's expense...

At the risk of sounding overly dramatic, I assure you that people of the state of Washington are very fortunate to have Mr. Stewart working on their behalf. I wish it were in my power to give this man a raise, bonus, or some other form of recognition for this effort.

Perhaps you are in a position to provide him with some token of the recognition he deserves.

Sincerely, Eric Warren

Editor's note: Ron Stewart is a concurrent planning social worker with the Indian Child Welfare Unit in the Spokane Division of Children and Family Services office.

ChANGES in Office Building 2

The next time you visit Office Building 2 (Headquarters) in Olympia you may be surprised by all the construction inside the building. OB-2 is now being retrofitted with three elevators in the center core of the building.

The installation of these elevators is phase one of three construction phases. Future construction will remove the escalators, create a central staircase, and add entrances to the east and west sides of the building.

The construction has reduced overall available space within the building and three divisions have moved from OB-2 to the new Blake Office Park in Lacey.

The Finance Division, including the Office of Financial Recovery, has moved to Blake Office Building West. Their physical address is 4450 10th Ave. S.E., Lacey. The mailing address and mail stop for all of the offices within the Finance Division remain the same.

The Employee Services Division and Administrative Services Division have moved to Blake Office Building East. Their physical address is 4500 10th Ave. S.E., Lacey. The mailing addresses and mailstops remain the same.

All staff in the three divisions have new phone numbers.

For more information about the construction within OB-2, contact Bob Gilleg, facilities manager, at (360) 902-8332.

Yvonne YellowWolf receives Fellowship Award

By Vicki O'Keef, University of Washington School of Social Work, Forum

"I learned to write with a stick in the sand of the Columbia River," said Yvonne YellowWolf, second-year master's in social work (MSW) student in the University of Washington's Evening Degree Program. She is the first recipient of an award from the MSW Fellowship Fund for Traditional and Contemporary Social Work.

The fund was created by Judy Kopp, associate professor of social work, shortly before she died in 1996. In her bequest she designated Tony Ishisaka, associate professor of social work, and Ray Bending, senior lecturer in social work, to choose the individual to receive the award.

"We selected Yvonne because Judy had recruited her to the school and because she was succeeding in spite of experiencing three strokes," Bending explained. "We also chose her because she wants to combine traditional Native American healing with contemporary methods in her social work practice, and this was something Judy had specified in her bequest."

YellowWolf earned her bachelor of arts degree in rehabilitation counseling from Seattle University in 1981 and then spent over 10 years working for the Department of Social and Health Services. In her last five years there, she worked with children and families in the Native American unit in Region 4.

"I hadn't planned on coming back to school," she said. "It was very difficult at first because the strokes had created a number of problems for me. I had to re-learn how to write, read, listen and concentrate. I've seen people who have experienced strokes just want to lie down and die, but I felt I could not just sit and do nothing. I knew there had to be something for me."

She said it was Judy Kopp's personal support that led her to believe she could be successful in attaining her MSW. Her family also encouraged her, telling her to ignore those who said she couldn't do it.

"The school has been wonderful to me and I'm honored to be here," she said. "I've attained the highest level of education of anyone in my family, and I encourage anyone who has the opportunity to go to school."

YellowWolf has spent her last practicum working with homeless youth at the University District Youth Center and with youth and substance abuse issues at Community Health Services.



Sharing our successes and commitment to reaching beyond the expected to the excellent

Quality **IN** DSHS

Projects place emphasis on improving customer service

Some staff worry that the whole point of quality improvement is to save dollars and staff time. They wonder where customer satisfaction fits in. Can a project be successful if all it does is please clients and make their lives a little easier?

The answer is a resounding "Yes!" In fact, Gov. Gary Locke takes a keen interest in customer satisfaction, just as we do. He recently asked state agencies to establish agencywide customer service standards in key areas.

Many outstanding DSHS quality improvement projects have not resulted in any staff or dollar savings – they have simply responded to a customer need. For example, a recent project to prevent unnecessary pressure sores for nursing home residents didn't save a dime, but clients obtained safer care. Several projects in Economic Services have been devoted to reducing client waiting time and inconvenience.

Some people like to say that government doesn't have "customers." To quote Jonathan Walters in his book, **Measuring Up**, "Rather than arguing about a word, it's probably a better idea to figure out who it is you as a governmental entity are supposed to be helping – or overseeing..." Many of us "help" or "oversee" external customers, but there are numbers of DSHS staff who serve other staff right inside the department. Quality Improvement projects can focus on improving services to both internal and external customers.

In this issue, we have selected several projects that are devoted primarily to improving customer service. We hope these examples will stimulate even more projects focusing on our varied customers.

PROJECT: UPFRONT SERVICES AT THE BELLINGHAM COMMUNITY SERVICES OFFICE

Customer service in the lobby of the Bellingham Community Services Office (CSO) needed to be improved. The physical layout of the lobby was not designed to fit the type of services now being provided to the customer. Essential information was available in the adjoining Job Resource Room, but was not being accessed by clients. The customer service specialists needed additional training to handle more complex client questions.

The changes include: the Resource Room now has a permanent staff person, assisted by a work-study student and a volunteer. Customers can access information on wage progression, resume development, job announcements, family planning, and Diversion Cash Assistance.

The customer service specialists received additional training and now work more independently, handling more client questions for the financial eligibility staff. The waiting room was redesigned to provide greater efficiency and comfort with tables and chairs for clients. This has created work spaces for clients.

Results:

- Improved customer access to job information.
- Increased ability to serve clients at the front counter, which results in less disruption to staff who are processing cases, saving approximately 40 hours per week.
- Customers receive more comprehensive service from the front counter staff.



Team members: Hollis Jackson, Rachel Riggles, Jean Pittman, Chris Rakhonen, Janet Henderson, and Marijo Olson, CSO administrator.

PROJECT: KING EASTSIDE APPOINTMENT PROCESS

The King Eastside Community Services Office interview appointment process for applicants and reapplicants for public assistance programs has been revised. Previously clients turned in an application form and scheduled an interview for a later date, for an average delay of 6.5 days. No-shows and reschedule requests were time consuming for clerical staff, causing delays in appointment availability for new applicants and making time management difficult for financial staff.

The new system allows clients to walk into the office during specified times to submit an application. Clients may then decide to wait for an available interviewer on that day or return another day, whichever is more convenient.

Results:

- Cycle time between application and appointment dates decreased from an average of 6.5 days to walk-in scheduling on a first-come, first-served bases. The client has more control on when she/he will be interviewed.
- Previously, the no-show rate was 26.5 percent. That is nearly eliminated and the only appointments now scheduled are those requiring an interpreter.
- A total of 1,030 hours are saved annually for clerical staff in tracking applications and scheduling and rescheduling.



Team members: Carol Schmidt, Sue O'Riley, Joyce Hensen, Gloria Hanson, Gail Miller, Beverly Rhodes, Yvonne Orlinksi, Carolyn Glenn, Leslie Patten, Linda Jacobsen, and Angel Walker.

PROJECT: MENTAL HEALTH JUVENILE FORENSIC EVALUATIONS AT CHILD STUDY AND TREATMENT CENTER

The Child Study and Treatment Center (CSTC) has experienced an increase in the demand for juvenile forensic evaluations from seven a year in 1992 to over 60 in 1998. In the past, all evaluations were conducted on an inpatient basis costing \$395 a day for up to 30 days. The huge increase in forensic patients meant delays in admissions for severely emotionally



Holly Galbreath



Anthony Dubose

(Continued on page 4)

Changes in quality leadership

Recently, DSHS Quality Consultant Bill Wegeleben returned to his roots at the House of Representatives, accepting a position as Deputy Chief Clerk.

Taking over his leadership role in the department's quality program are Cheryl Stephani, Special Assistant to the Secretary, taking the lead as the quality consultant, assisted by Solomon Uwadiale as Quality Coordinator. For more information or assistance on the department's quality efforts, Cheryl Stephani can be reached at (360) 902-7783; Solomon Uwadiale can be reached at (360) 902-7649.

A project doesn't have to just focus on dollars

(Continued from page 3)
disturbed children.

In 1997-98 the juvenile forensic service was reorganized.

- Evaluations were conducted on an outpatient basis by CSTC psychologists going to detention facilities or having children brought to the hospital for interviews and testing without admissions.

- A position was created at CSTC in collaboration with the Washington Institute for Mental Health for a post-doctoral fellow from the University of Washington to train juvenile forensics and to assist in conducting these evaluations.

- An additional psychologist/cottage program director position was filled.

Results:

- Evaluations have increased from seven to over 60 per year.
- Inpatient beds used for children being evaluated are now used to treat severely emotionally disturbed children.
- The cost of evaluations has dropped from approximately \$11,850 (\$395 per day x 30 days inpatient) to approximately \$1,500.

The evaluations are completed in a more timely manner, with most completed within the 14 day time limit ordered by the court.

Team members: Holly N. Galbreath, Ph.D., Anthony Dubose, PsyD., and Jon McCellan, M.D.

PROJECT: FAMILY GROUP CONFERENCE PROJECT, KING SOUTH

Prior to the use of Family Group Conferences, extended family members were virtually excluded from the planning and decision-making that occurs when parents and their children become involved with the Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS).

As a result, an enormous resource was being left untapped with the people kept out of the loop who care the most for a child and often are in the best position to ensure



Team members: (From left) Melissa Hansen, Bill Caughey, and Carol Mitchell

the child's safety. By excluding extended families, individuals who often have the greatest impact in altering a parent's behavior were not privy to crucial information regarding DCFS's involvement.

Family Group Conferences provide a forum for parents and their extended family to learn all the information in a case of child abuse or neglect. They hear from each professional involved in the case and learn about community resources. With this information the family develops a plan to ensure the safety and welfare of the child. Professional services are augmented by family supports.

Results:

- The Kent DCFS office began using Family Group Conferences in August 1996. As of December 1998, 54 meetings have been held representing 123 children, most of whom would have been placed in foster care.
- 19 children moved from foster care into relative care.
- Permanency was achieved for 35 children through relative guardianships or relative adoptions.
- Through family support and assistance, 24 children were able to remain in their parent's care.
- Three children safely returned to their parents' care after a stay in foster care.

Team members: Bill Caughey, child welfare services supervisor, and Melissa Hansen, Family Group Conference coordinator/facilitator, and Carol Mitchell, previous Family Group Conference coordinator/facilitator.

PROJECT: VANCOUVER DIVISION OF CHILD SUPPORT CUSTOMER SERVICES POINT OF CONTACT QUALITY IMPROVEMENT TEAM

Staff in the Vancouver Child Support Office determined that customer service could be achieved in a more timely and efficient manner, and the appearance and utility of the office lobby could be improved to enhance customer relations.

They formed a team to develop recommendations and an implementation plan to improve the process by which customers who contact the office in person or by phone are served in a more efficient and effective manner.

As a result of the team's recommendation, they formed a customer service unit as an independent unit designed to assist and resolve the majority of customer needs at the first point of contact. The customers no longer have to wait for a call back or wait for a second person to assist them. The unit provides comprehensive service to all walk-in and telephone customers, both custodial and non-custodial.



Team members: (From left) Wayne Cowley, Linda Cothren, Vicki Cates, Kay Gehle, Julie Gonzales, Debra McEldery, Joseph Mendoza, Jan Karcher and Karolyn Fox.

Results:

- The process for assisting walk-in customers was reduced from 90 steps to just five.
- The time required to serve customers was reduced to an average of 12.5 minutes.

Team members: Linda Cothren, Karolyn Fox, Kay Gehle, Julie Gonzales, Jan Karcher, Lisa Markegard, Debra McEldery, Joe Mendoza. Resource members: Vicki Cates, Wayne Cowley, and Steve Leavell.

The Four Steps to Change



Step 1: Unconsciously Incompetent

Definition:

• Has no clue.



Step 2: Consciously Incompetent

Definition:

• Knows there is something he should learn or do, but just doesn't make an effort.



Step 3: Consciously Competent

Definition:

• Underestimates one's own knowledge. Thinks about and practices doing the right thing.

Example:

• Leadership Tour, Quarterly Report and Daily News



Step 4: Unconsciously Competent

Definition:

• Understands the concepts and applies them automatically as the logical thing to do.

Example:

• WorkFirst Evaluation Manual, Evolution of Re-Employ Washington Workers



Sharing our successes and commitment to reaching beyond the expected to the excellent

Each of the eight administrations has steering committees to assist in leading the department's efforts to continue providing quality services to the residents of the state of Washington. For more information on the quality improvement activities occurring throughout the department, contact Cheryl Stephani, quality consultant, at (360) 902-7783 or e-mail at stephcs@dshs.wa.gov. Please visit the DSHS Intranet Quality Improvement site at intra.dshs.wa.gov/qualityimprovement for ongoing updates of plans, successes, and accomplishments.

August is Child Support Awareness Month

(Continued from page 1)

For their efforts, Washington's employers deserve a resounding "Thank You" for a job well done.

If a non-custodial parent changes jobs frequently, it is very difficult to collect child support consistently by means of a payroll action. It often takes DCS several weeks, or even months, to find a non-custodial parent's new employer. In 1990, the Legislature created the New Hire Registry. Employers in a limited number of

occupational categories were required to report newly-hired employees to the division. That year, 18,000 employers cooperated with this new program.

Due to the Washington state program's success, the federal government required all states to implement the new hire reporting program for all occupational categories.

Beginning Oct. 1, 1998, all employers were required to report newly-hired employees to the

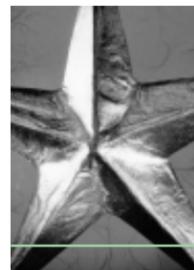
division. Over 200,000 employers have now cooperated with the program. The New Hire Reporting Program has significantly shortened the time lag between when an employer hires a new employee and when the division sends the employer a wage withholding action.

There are several activities planned for Child Support Awareness Month. Gov. Gary Locke will sign a proclamation honoring and thanking employers for their

support of child support programs. Some of the division's nine field offices will hold an open house for employers and hold award ceremonies for compliant employers in their area.

The DCS New Hire Program would not be such a success without the help of employers throughout Washington. If employers wish to report a newly-hired employee by phone, they call 1-800-562-0479. Employers also report through the New Hire Web site, <http://www.wa.gov/dshs/newhire/>. The division's Employer Ombudsman assists employers with any child support issue. The Employer Ombudsman can be reached at 1-800-591-2760.

Washington's employers are important to the DCS. Even though child support regulations increase the demands on employers' time and financial resources, employers have been unflinching in their support of programs that help Washington's children. They are the unsung heroes of welfare reform and child support. They deserve our continued support and thanks.



Governor honors three DSHS managers for Distinguished Management Leadership

Three DSHS managers recently received the Distinguished Manager Award from Gov. Gary Locke for their outstanding performance and results achieved during the past year.

Alfonso Garcia
Regional Administrator,
Region 2
Division of Children
and Family Services



"Al Garcia does not allow polarization; working on common goals and creating synergy are his true knacks." — Rosie Oreskovich, Assistant Secretary, Children's Administration

Regional administrators for the Division of Children and Family Services face critical issues related to providing for the safety and well-being of each child that needs services. These services are often complex and require close coordination of staff and key community partners. Al Garcia has shown outstanding results in his work with internal staff issues and the community. His basic approach has been one of implementing shared decision making, and using respect, good will and collaboration.

Al was the first administrator to require line staff to record the dates of their contacts and be sure they meet policy expectations. He requires his managers to monitor staff to ensure this happens. He makes sure his staff are well informed about expectations and has instituted a new quality improvement project that creates curriculum to train new staff, quickly orienting them to the agency and their work in child welfare.

Improving staff morale is a priority for Al. He developed a staff advisory committee and includes them in the biennial allotment process. He believes in a good work environment and facilitated moving staff to improved office space. He is supportive of his management team and encourages creativity. He also actively recruits minority staff in an effort to respond to the region's diverse population.

Phyllis Lowe
Regional Administrator,
Region 4
Community Services
Division



"Phyllis Lowe is able to draw the strengths from each individual, enhancing the effectiveness of the region as a whole." — Liz Dunbar, Assistant Secretary, Economic Services Administration

Region 4 (King County) is a dynamic, political environment. Realizing success in WorkFirst (the state's public assistance program) presents numerous critical challenges. Phyllis Lowe has taken a leadership role in working with the community to ensure they share the same vision for WorkFirst.

She established ambitious but achievable performance standards for Community Service Office administrators and invites administrators to develop innovative strategies. As a result, each CSO learns from one another and incorporates best practices into its service delivery plans.

Her leadership has helped the region reduce Temporary Assistance for Needy Families caseloads by 50 percent from January 1997 to February 1999.

Phyllis encourages and enables all employees to contribute and participate in the decision making process. She has developed opportunities for staff to demonstrate their skills, knowledge, and abilities as potential CSO administrator candidates. She also provides opportunities for staff to develop those skills.

Christy Ridout
Director
Automated Client Eligibility System (ACES)

"Christy Ridout recognizes that every job is important and critical and she ensures that staff have the resources and support to perform their jobs in a superior manner." — Charley Reed, DSHS Deputy Secretary

Christy Ridout manages the complex computer system known as the Automated Client Eligibility System (ACES). She has shown outstanding management skills in responding to the need to constantly adapt the complex system to perform additional, unanticipated functions.

Christy has led efforts to ensure ACES adequately serves the complex needs of the state's WorkFirst program.

She and her staff also worked closely with the Electronic Benefits Transfer Project staff, steering committee, division directors, and vendor to achieve design and implementation solutions that met business needs.

She and her staff have been major partners in Food Stamp Accuracy initiatives. Under her leadership, ACES has been tested for Y2K compliance; this has been done on schedule and without any outside funding. Also under her direction, access to the data stored in ACES has been improved, allowing for greater research and data analysis.

Christy manages a staff of both state employees and contractors. She has engendered an environment that encourages workforce diversity.

email: It's a tool and a state resource, use it wisely!

Hoaxes, hypes and chain letters may often contain a compelling message, but they don't pertain to state business and should not be forwarded.

Initially, they are sent to a large distribution list. The message requests the reader to forward the message to family, friends, co-workers, etc. If successful, this causes unnecessary traffic on the e-mail system, slowing it considerably. In some cases, the increased activity has brought entire networks down.

To help you identify them, the following examples are provided:

It is sometimes difficult to tell the difference between a hoax, a hype or a chain letter — many consider them all to be hoaxes. A good example is the "Disney" message. It appeared as if it were sent by Walt Disney Jr. and promised the first 13,000 people that re-sent the message 15 times, \$5,000 or a free trip to Disney World — all expenses paid.

Again, these messages have nothing to do with state business. Administrative Policy 15.15 states employees who receive messages not appropriate to state business purposes should delete them.

If you see a hype, hoax or chain letter message, delete it and forget it. If you suspect it may have a computer virus or have questions, contact Billy Allen, ISSD, at (360) 902-7709.